Clinical efficacy of superfine dispersed lentinan (beta-1,3-glucan) in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma.


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Abstract

BACKGROUND/AIMS:

Recently, complementary alternative medicine is actively performed for cancer therapy. We investigated the effectiveness of supplementary food containing superfine dispersed lentinan (beta-1,3-glucan) in patients with unresectable or recurrent hepatocellular carcinoma in a multicenter study.

METHODOLOGY:

Peripheral blood was collected prior to the test food ingestion and was incubated with fluorescein-labeled lentinan. The rates of lentinan-binding CD14+ monocytes were determined by flow cytometry. Patient survival times were followed up for 3 years.

RESULTS:

Thirty-six patients were eligible among 40 enrolled patients. Median survival time of eligible patients was 13.6 months (95% confidence interval, 8.7-18.9 months). Survival times of patients who ingested test food for a mean period of 47 weeks (range, 26 to 145 weeks) were significantly longer than that of patients who ingested for 7 to 12 weeks (p < 0.05). The rates of lentinan-binding cells in CD14+ monocytes showed individual variations (0.1-19.7%; Median, 1.6%). Survival times (median survival time, 16.3 months) of lentinan-high-binding group were significantly longer than those (median survival time, 12.5 months) of lentinan-low-binding group (p < 0.05).

CONCLUSIONS:

A superfine dispersed lentinan-containing supplementary food is effective for hepatocellular carcinoma patients' survival. Long-time ingestion is preferable. Assessment of lentinan-binding CD14+ monocytes is a promising prognostic predictor.

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